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Tips for Informational Interviews

An informational interview involves **talking with your potential Host Supervisor** to gain a better understanding of their organization and the research project that you hope to work on. It is important to approach the informational interview like you would a job interview, but you have the opportunity to ask lots of questions so that you can determine if the project is a good fit for you as well. By being prepared for this interview, you will be demonstrating your interest in the project, your organizational skills, making a great first impression and instilling trust

You may also invite your CBE Program Staff, your Faculty Supervisor and your research partner (if applicable) to attend this meeting.

You will receive the contact information of your potential host supervisor from the CBE Program Staff. Please review the following steps as you prepare to book the interview:

1. Read up on the organization
 - Read the organization's website (if they have one) to familiarize yourself with the aims, mission and successes of the organization.
 - Review the Promotional Copy of the project (provided by CBE Staff), so that you clearly understand what the project is and why it is important to the organization and the community.
2. Is the project a good fit for you?
 - Reflect on the skills and experiences you have that you can offer to the project
 - Reflect on how this project connects with your academic discipline and/or course
 - Consider what your time constraints are
3. Scheduling the informational interview
 - Please make the initial contact by phone or email.
 - Take the time to briefly introduce yourself and why you are interested in the project.
 - Ask to schedule an informational interview (usually 30 - 60 minutes)
 - Schedule to meet in person and advise CBE Program Staff of the appointment.
4. Preparing for the Interview: Things to bring with you
 - Be sure you know the directions to the meeting place.
 - Prepare a list of questions that you plan to ask about the project expectations and deliverables
 - Prepare to talk about what you hope to learn or "get out of" the project
 - Pen and paper to take notes
 - Please bring a copy of your course syllabus and your academic timetable.
 - You can bring a resume if you like.
5. During the Interview
 - Be prepared with questions and be ready to listen and take notes.
 - By the end of the meeting, you and the host supervisor will decide whether or not you will continue working together on this project. A "good fit" is important to everyone. If the first project is not for you, the second one may be.

For information on Informational Interviews in an employment context, please visit Trent Careers Resource Centre http://www.trentu.ca/careers/students/options_infointerview.php

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